a code processing section for encoding the bid selected by the bidder sub-system using the predetermined code parameter obtained by said code parameter acquisition section, and

a transmission section for sending a message including an encoded bid encoded by said coding section to a tender opening sub-system, and

a tender opening sub-system including:

a reception section for receiving messages from bidder sub-systems including encoded bids until a closing time,

a candidate price selection section for sequentially selecting contract price candidates beginning with one of a highest and a lowest within said tenderable range,

a decode parameter acquisition section for acquiring a predetermined decode parameter corresponding to a contract price candidate selected by the selection section, and

a determination section for decoding encoded bids using a predetermined decode parameter corresponding to a contract price candidate selected by the selection section to determine whether a bid that is the same as the contract price candidate selected by the selection section exists among encoded bids received by the reception section.

2. (Twice Amended) The electronic tender system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the code processing section of the bidder sub-system encodes a bid value using the predetermined code parameter obtained by the code parameter acquisition section, and

wherein the reception section of the tender opening sub-system includes a decoding section for sequentially decoding encoded bids received by the reception section using the predetermined decode parameter acquired by the decode parameter acquisition section, and a judgment section for judging that a coded bid is identical to a contact price candidate selected by the selection section when the decoding result is equal to a fixed value.

3. (Twice Amended) The electronic tender system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the code processing section of the bidder sub-system performs encoding using a predetermined public key corresponding to the bid, and

wherein the decoding section of the tender opening sub-system performs a decoding operation using a secret key corresponding to the predetermined public key corresponding to the contract price candidate.

4. (Twice Amended) The electronic tender system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the code processing section of the bidder sub-system performs encoding using a predetermined public key corresponding to the bid, and

wherein the decoding section of the tender opening sub-system performs a decoding operation using a secret key corresponding to the predetermined public key corresponding to the contract price candidate.

5. (Twice Amended) The electronic tender system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said tender opening sub-system includes an announcement section for announcing one of a portion of a predetermined decode parameter acquired by the decode parameter acquisition section and decoding results obtained in the determination section for each contract price candidate.

6. (Twice Amended) The electronic tender system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said tender opening sub-system includes an announcement section for announcing one of a portion of a predetermined decode parameter acquired by the decode parameter acquisition section and decoding results obtained in the determination section for each contract price candidate.

7. (Twice Amended) The electronic tender system as claimed in claim 3, wherein said tender opening sub-system includes an announcement section for announcing one of a portion of a predetermined decode parameter acquired by the decode parameter acquisition section and decoding results obtained in the determination section for each contract price candidate.

8. (Twice Amended) The electronic tender system as claimed in claim 4, wherein said tender opening sub-system includes an announcement section for announcing one of a portion of a predetermined decode parameter acquired by the decode parameter acquisition section and decoding results obtained in the determination section for each contract price candidate.

9. (Amended) A method for placing a bid for a contract, comprising:
determining a bid price to be used in a bid;
obtaining a predetermined code parameter corresponding to the bid price, wherein different predetermined code parameters correspond to respective different bid prices;
encoding the bid in accordance with the predetermined code parameter; and
transmitting a message including the encoded bid to a bid receiving system.

10. (Amended) A method for determining a contract price from received bids, comprising:
receiving a plurality of bids for a contract;
determining a predetermined decode parameter corresponding to one of a highest and a lowest contract price candidate within a tenderable range of the contract, wherein different predetermined decode parameters correspond to respective different contract price candidates;
attempting to decode each of said plurality of bids using said predetermined decode parameter;
if at least one of said plurality of bids is decodeable using said predetermined decode parameter, determining that said contract price is equal to a price of said at least one bid; and
if none of said plurality of bids is decodeable using said predetermined decode parameter, determining a next predetermined decode parameter corresponding to a next closest contract price candidate with respect to the